

MEETING NOTES
Grandview Small Area Guide Plan Process
Kick-Off
Thursday, April 14, 2011, 7:00 PM
Edina City Hall
Council Chambers

Staff Present:

Cary Teague
Jackie Hoogenakker

Kick-Off Facilitators:

Kevin Staunton
Mike Fischer

Others Present:

James Hovland/Mayor
Joni Bennett
Ken Potts – Planning Commissioner
Kim Melin
Randy Halvorson
Chris Rofidal
Steve Buss
Gene Persha
Richard Borland
Larry Chestler
Laura Giertsen
Ellen Jones
Terry Ahlstrum
Dick Ward
Bill Neuendorf
Tim McIlwain
B. Dornblaser
Any Brown
Suzanne Davison
Greg Domke
Sandy Fox
Dick Crockett
Arne Cook
Tom Bonneville
Kim Montgomery
Tom Ruppert
Peter Sussman
Lisa Diehl
Bob Kojetin
David Davison
Bernie Beaver

Kick-off

Mayor Hovland welcomed everyone to the kick-off meeting of the small area plan process for the Grandview area. The Mayor introduced the facilitators of the process; Mike Fischer, Kevin Staunton, Michael Schroeder (not present) and Cary Teague, staff support.

Introduction

Kevin Stanton gave a brief history of what occurred in the past during the Public Works Small Area Plan Study process. Staunton said that many of the elements of that process would be incorporated into the Grandview Small Area Plan process. Staunton said he envisions facilitators (Kevin Staunton, Michael Schroeder, Mike Fischer) and small community advisory groups (CAT) anchored by a steering committee. Staunton welcomed everyone, new comers and familiar faces that took part in the Public Work Small Area Plan process.

Kevin Staunton delivered a power point presentation and highlighted the following:

- There are no rules or legal requirements that guide a small area plan process.
- A small area plan is a “roadmap” for future development and redevelopment of an area.
- There are questions that need to be answered such as; how did we get here; what do we need to accomplish and how are we going to do it?
- Identify the parcels included in the Grandview Small Area Plan study. Grandview is comprised of roughly 19 parcels.
- Acknowledge and work with the constant features of the area; Highway 100, Railroad Tracks, Vernon/50th and Eden Avenue.
- Typical elements of a small area plan include the following; executive summary, background, vision and goals, challenges, development framework, implementation.
- Use the Comprehensive Plan

Staunton said one of the outcomes of the public works small area plan was seven guiding principles; which would be followed throughout this process. The seven principles are as follows:

1. Leverage publicly owned parcels and civic presence to create a vibrant and connected district that serves as a catalyst for high quality, integrated public and private development.
2. Enhance the District's economic viability as a neighborhood center with regional connections, recognizing that meeting the needs of both businesses and residents will make the district a good place to do business.
3. Turn perceived barriers into opportunities. Consider layering development over supporting infrastructure and taking advantage of the natural topography of the area.
4. Design for the present and the future by pursuing logical increments of change using key parcels as stepping-stones to a more vibrant, walkable, functional, attractive, and lie-filled place.
5. Organize parking as an effective resource for the district by linking community parking to public and private destinations while also providing parking that is convenient for businesses and customers.
6. Improve movement within and access to the district for people of all ages by facilitating multiple modes of transportation, and preserve future transit opportunities provided by the rail corridor.
7. Create an identity and unique sense of place that incorporates natural spaces into high quality and sustainable development reflecting Edina's innovative development heritage.

Continuing Staunton said the process is open to all who want to participate, adding he envisions two ways to participate. 1. as a member of a working group (CAT), or 2. A Member of the steering committee. Staunton explained that once the working groups have been established he foresees a convener for each group. Continuing, Staunton added that the steering committee would manage the working groups.

Staunton said the process would continue to be informal and would be directed in 3-4 month stages. Staunton said he envisions retaining consultants at a later stage in the process and reported that this process received a \$100,000 grant from the Met Council.

Mike Fischer addressed the group and said that before the group establishes the working groups ground rules need to be adhered to. Fischer said that everyone should be open minded and everyone should look for areas of agreement; not disagreement however, if there is disagreement; disagree respectfully.

Fischer said he envisions the establishment of a number of working groups or subgroups. These “groups” are the CAT. Fischer stated that he envisions groups forming into the following “groups”

1. Transportation/circulation/Parking
2. Land use/Design
3. Community Needs
4. Market Analysis
5. Financing
6. Infrastructure
7. Public Realm

Fischer asked everyone to jot down their ideas/questions and place them on the “sticky wall”. These ideas/questions would be used throughout the process.

Everyone present broke down into “informal” groups. All comments made were collected.

Comments/questions collected from “sticky wall”

1. How are we going to pay for this?
2. How many property owners have you talked with? How many (if any) are “on board” for redevelopment of the area?
3. What precedents can we learn from? – Same acreage bisected by a highway?
4. What are the options for improving pedestrian access across Highway 100?
5. What is the time commitment to be in a work group? Expectations of involvement?
6. How do I walk from City Hall to library?
7. What is the timeline/expectation for starting? Do we have anything “pushing us” to move quickly?
8. If you are going to “piece” together the properties; how can you/we make a plan to implement in terms of “flow” and design?
9. Can we create a more welcoming look to the district? (trees, poles, flags, pillars to say “Welcome to Edina!”)?
10. How will we get a community center which is solely a community center?
11. Has a market analysis been done to know if this area is of interest/in demand for retailers? Who/what type of retailer is interested in this place?
12. How can we work with developers to improve traffic in advance of proposed changes?
13. How are decisions going to be made about what land is retained for public use?
14. Should we expand the area under consideration to include the connections between Benton Avenue and Highway 100? Could impact traffic flow in the Grandview District.
15. Should the Edina Community Center participate in this process? Is their inclusion via the School District?
16. What is the lifespan of our current community center? How might we evaluate our needs for a future community center?
17. What modes of transportation should be planned for in addition to automobiles?

18. How is the sequencing of the “development” process to be determined?
19. How will major unknowns like the ability to straighten out ramps be accounted for in the process?
20. How to facilitate walking the area and park close enough to building to accommodate the aging population?
21. Obtain all drawings of: Existing grades; all existing utilities and private utilities.
22. Should we interview a market consultant i.e. to study review and suggest land uses not fulfilled in this location?
23. Will the community’s desire for public resources and facilities be assessed and factored into this process?
24. Reserve potential role for rail transit.
25. Can we get a transportation hub for public transit in this area?
26. Enhance non-auto experience.
27. A great potential for transit center (future BRT or rail)
28. MNDOT involvement early in the process: How do we ensure this regarding any Hwy 100 exit/entrance ramp change suggestions?
29. How and when would the State of MN be involved in reviewing options for uses of the property it owns.
30. Are we considering a restaurant/entertainment focus for the small area plan (SAP)?
31. What properties or sites within the District are expected to be in play within the next two years?
32. The City currently has the nicest buildings in the District – How can we “encourage” the other property owners to update and maintain?
33. Can the air-rights above the rail and DOT rights-of-way be developed?
34. Have there been other areas within the community identified for small area plans?
35. Do you want the Grandview District to be the center/heart of Edina?
36. What is the realistic probability of the rail being used regularly?
37. Is this a location for iconic architecture to proudly identify Edina?
38. Is this a possible location for affordably priced housing?
39. Can pedestrians/bikers feel safe getting to the site?
40. Ingress/egress to the site via bikes, autos
41. Ask: Are we still following the 7 guiding principles?
42. How do changes in the Grandview District affect the rest of Edina? (e.g. if we move the school buses how does that impact the folks at their new location?)
43. Envision more broadly all potential uses in an open-minded vs. exclusive approach.
44. Maximizing District potential.
45. Can we create a ring-road that is like a mall for pedestrians and bikes?
46. Partnership of private/public with ongoing community input and review.
47. What density is contemplated? This will affect infrastructure, look and feel, # and types of uses, financing market and political acceptance, etc.
48. How can we assure City and School board support?
49. How do we model all forms of transportation at once (to some level of detail)? E.g. trains, buses, cars, pedestrians, bicycles, etc.
50. Which properties will be included in the development plan? i.e. what will the blank canvas look like in terms of size shape connectivity.
51. Can the school buses be serviced by the City new garage facility? Better use of public \$.
52. Feasibility of implementation?
53. What areas of the project other than roads/sidewalks would require public financing?
54. Can we get businesses to sponsor the green spaces, bus shelters, benches to make the area more people friendly?
55. Can we get rid of the school bus garage?
56. How can the school district be motivated to relocate to a more viable location outside of the Grandview District.

57. Is this meant to attract new businesses and services?
58. Are the current businesses a part of this process?
59. Can we feasibly cap over Highway 100 to gain space and decrease noise/clutter from highway?
60. Transport – Get particulars for rail – Lot width needs; long term rail schedule; speed of trains; rail-commuter stop; can we plan to span over tracks with parking deck to Jerry's City ramp -; planned changes to RR; safety and air pollution.
61. How do we design optimal multi-mode transportation for this site?
62. Should the 50th and France mode be represented?
63. How to use the air space over the RR tracks?
64. When does actual implementation of the "final" plan begin?
65. Is it a given that Eden Avenue stays where it is and how it is?
66. How do we integrate potential passenger rail into an overall transportation plan for the area in question?
67. Are we considering a "town center" focus for the SAP?
68. Will improved vehicular access be addressed as part of the SAP?
69. Does MNDOT want a "park and ride" facility in this area?
70. Can we make the removal of the school bus garage a priority? (removes a barrier to development).
71. Can bike paths be integrated into the plan and the broader plan for Edina bike paths?
72. Transport – Determine accesses to area if 100 off ramp is eliminated.
73. Can Eden Avenue be lowered and build over?
74. The first question is would MNDOT allow changes to exits and entrances to Vernon/50th from Highway 100?
75. How does this City gain cooperation with private property owners for our small area plan?
76. How will identified obstacles (such as moving the school bus garage) be handled?
77. Will we set any limits to the design? (for example not to exceed 6 stories, green design only, etc.
78. How will the \$100,000 grant allocation be determined?
79. How will the community's desire for public resources and spaces be evaluated?
80. Does Gus Young Lane have to stay the way it is?
81. What priority or Phase I needs to be considered first?
82. Do we have to keep the bus garage in this location?
83. Is there an upper-limit to the density? How do we define it-dwelling units per acres? Utility infrastructure, traffic capacity?
84. Have the plans for Highway 100 expansion been looked at? (If any future development).
85. What kind of consultants are going to be engaged?
86. Can private owners be encouraged to share parking facilities?
87. How can pedestrian access from neighborhoods be improved?
88. Parking – Do we consider car parking and bicycle parking?
89. How will we get a community area where people are comfortable walking eating, working?
90. Can I participate in more than one topic committee?
91. Sell public works building to school district.
92. Financing – study all sources of financing and grants, Fed/State/Met Council.
93. How will we figure the const/benefit of green spaces?
94. If current privately owned land parcels are envisioned for alternative use, how does current owner control or impact process, or get compensated?
95. How easy is it to work with MNDOT on Highway 100 issues?
96. Transforming transportation – how to bring viability to the beginning and center of study.
97. How will this process affect other developments potentially proposed in the City?

Kevin Staunton directed participants to share some of their ideas/questions.

In summary participants expressed the need for all factions to be part of this process; school district, business owners, property owners and residents. What are the merchant's needs? Property owner's needs? Resident's needs? School district needs? It was also acknowledged that the bus garage plays an important part of the process, pointing out it appears during discussions the bus garage was always in the forefront. It was also noted that careful consideration needs to be given to certain issues; such as density; especially the City's tolerance for density in this area.

Kevin Staunton explained he believes the Grandview Small Area Plan process will take a year, adding it's a time commitment for everyone involved. Staunton said the logistics of when, where, how many meetings, etc. still need to be worked out. Staunton said the next meeting is scheduled for April 21st at the Edina Senior Center at 7:00 PM, adding at that time he envisions establishing formal work groups. Staunton stated that further along in the process requests for proposals need to be drafted so a consultant can be hired.

Staunton and Fischer thanked everyone for attending.

Next Meeting Date: April 21, 2011, 7:00 PM Edina Senior Center

Submitted by

Jackie Hoogenakker

Edina Planning Department